

THE CAPTURE OF JEFFERSON DAVIS.

AN EXTRACT FROM A NARRATIVE, WRITTEN NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BUT FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF MY CHILDREN ONLY.

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IN anticipation of the capture of Richmond, the President had decided to remove his family to a place of probable security. He desired, however, to keep them as near as might be to the position General Lee intended to occupy when obliged to withdraw from the lines around Richmond and Petersburg. Charlotte, North Carolina, was selected for the purpose; and I was requested to accompany Mrs. Davis and the children on their journey.

We started from Richmond in the evening of the Friday before the city was evacuated. The President accompanied us to the cars; and after the ladies had taken their seats, but while we were still at the station of the Danville railroad, awaiting the signal for the train to move, he walked a short distance aside with me, and gave his final instructions in nearly or quite these words:

"My latest information from General Lee is, that Sheridan has been ordered to move with his cavalry to our right flank and to tear up the railroad; he is to remain there, destroying as much of the railroad as he can, until driven off by Hampton or by the lack of supplies; he is then to rejoin Grant in front of Petersburg if possible; otherwise, to go to Sherman in North Carolina. After establishing Mrs. Davis at Charlotte, you will return to Richmond as soon as you can."

I may here remark that, when a prisoner in Washington, in the following July, I one day got possession of a piece of a newspaper containing a part of the report; made by General Sheridan, of the operations under his command known as the "Battle of Five Forks." I remember the impression it gave me of the accuracy and freshness of General Lee's intelligence from General Grant's head-quarters, when I read, that day in prison, Sheridan's own statement showing that his orders were to move with cavalry only, to make a raid on the railroad on General Lee's right flank, and, when driven off, to return to Petersburg if he could, otherwise to join Sherman; and that it was during the night, when he was about to move with the cavalry only, that General Grant notified him of a change of plan, afterward giving him the corps of infantry with which the battle was actually fought.

Bidding good-bye to the President, we got away from Richmond about ten o'clock. It was a special train. Our party consisted of Mrs. Davis, Miss Howell (her sister), the four children, Ellen (the mulatto maid-servant), and James Jones (the mulatto coachman). With us were also the daughters of Mr. Trenholm, the Secretary of the Treasury, on their way to South Carolina, under the escort of midshipman James M. Morgan. That young gentleman was then engaged to Miss Trenholm, and afterward married her. There were no other passengers, and the train consisted of only two or three cars. In one of them, the coachman had the two carriage horses recently presented to Mrs. Davis by several gentlemen of Richmond. She had owned and used them for several years; but during the preceding winter the President's household had felt the pressure of the "hard times" even more than before; he had sold all his own horses except the one he usually rode; and, being in need of the money these would fetch, Mrs. Davis had, some time afterward, sold them also through a dealer. The afternoon of the sale, however, they were returned to the stable with a kind letter to her from Mr. James Lyons and a number of other prominent gentlemen, the purchasers, begging her to accept the horses as a gift in token of their regard. The price they had paid for the pair was, I think, twelve thousand dollars—a sum which dwindles somewhat when stated to have been in Confederate currency (worth, at that time, only some fifty for one in gold), and representing about two hundred and forty dollars in good money.

It illustrates the then condition of the railways and means of transportation in the Confederate States, that, after proceeding twelve or fifteen miles, our locomotive proved unable to take us over a slight up-grade. We came to a dead halt, and remained there all night. The next day was well advanced when Burksville Junction was reached; and I there telegraphed to the President the accounts received from the battle between Sheridan and Pickett.

It was Sunday morning before we arrived at Danville. While preparations were making there to send on our train toward Charlotte, Morgan and I took a walk through the town and made a visit to the residence of Major

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Sutherlin, the most conspicuous house in Danville. The train got off again by midday, but did not reach Charlotte until Tuesday. At Charlotte, we were courteously entertained for a day or two by Mr. Weil, an Israelite, a merchant of the town.

Communication had been so interrupted that we did not hear of the evacuation of Richmond until Mrs. Davis received a telegram, on Wednesday, from the President at Danville, merely announcing that he was there.

As soon as I could do so, and when we had comfortably established Mrs. Davis and her family in the house provided for them, I returned to Danville and joined the President. With several members of his cabinet, he was a guest at Major Sutherlin's house, where I arrived late in the evening, and spent the night.

A report coming in that the enemy's cavalry was approaching from the westward, the hills around Danville, where earth-works had already been thrown up, were manned by the officers and men that had constituted the Confederate navy in and near Richmond; and command of the force was given to Admiral Semmes (of the *Alabama*), who was made a brigadier-general for the nonce.

The several bureaus of the War Department, and perhaps several of the other departments, had arranged quarters for themselves in the town, and were organizing for regular work. A separate and commodious house had been provided (I think by the town authorities) as a head-quarters for the President and his personal staff; and Mr. M. H. Clark, our chief clerk, had already established himself there and was getting things in order. It was only the next afternoon, however, after my return to Danville, that the President received a communication informing him of the surrender by General Lee of the army of Northern Virginia, and gave orders for an immediate withdrawal into North Carolina. Under his directions, we set to work at once to arrange for a railway train to convey the more important officers of the Government and such others as could be got aboard, with our luggage and as much material as it was desired to carry along, including the boxes of papers that had belonged to the executive office in Richmond. With the coöperation of the officers of the Quartermaster's Department, the train was, with difficulty, got ready; and the guards I placed upon it excluded all persons and material not specially authorized by me to go aboard. Of course, a multitude was anxious to embark, and the guards were kept busy in repelling them.

As I stood in front of our head-quarters,

superintending the removal of luggage and boxes to the train, two officers rode up, their horses spattered with mud, and asked for the news. I told them of the surrender of General Lee's army, and inquired who they were and whence they had come. They had ridden from Richmond, and were just arrived, having made a wide detour from the direct road, to avoid capture by the enemy. One of them was a colonel from Tennessee. He expressed great eagerness to get on as rapidly as possible toward home. I remarked upon the freshness and spirit of his horse, and asked where he had got so good a steed. He said the horse belonged to a gentleman in Richmond, whose name he did not recollect, but who had asked him, in the confusion of the evacuation, to take the horse out to his son—then serving on General Ewell's staff. He added that, as General Ewell and staff had all been captured, he did not know what to do with the horse, and should be glad to turn him over to some responsible person—exactng an obligation to account to the owner. I said I should be glad to have the horse, and would cheerfully assume all responsibilities. The colonel rode off, but returned in a short time. He had tried to get on the railway train, but found he couldn't do it without an order from me; whereby he remarked that, if I would furnish such an order, he would accept my proposition about the horse. The arrangement was made immediately, and the colonel became a passenger on the train, which also conveyed my horse, with others belonging to the President and his staff.

That horse did me noble service, and I became very much attached to him. Further on, I shall tell the sad fate that befell him. Long afterward, I ascertained the owner was Mr. Edmond, of Richmond, with whom I had a conversation on the subject, when I was there attending upon the proceedings in the United States Court for the release of Mr. Davis from prison upon bail. I related the adventures of his steed, and offered to pay for him; but Mr. Edmond promptly and very generously said he could not think of taking pay for the horse; that the loss was but an incident of the loss of everything else we had all suffered in the result of the war, and that his inquiries had been made only because the animal was a great pet with the children, and they were all anxious to know his fate.

Among the people who besieged me for permits to enter the train was General R—, with several daughters and one or more of his staff officers. He had been on duty

in the "torpedo bureau," and had with him what he considered a valuable collection of fuses and other explosives. I distrusted such luggage as that, though the General confidently asserted it was quite harmless. I told him he couldn't go with us—there was no room for him. He succeeded at last, however, in getting access to the President, who had served with him, long years before, in the army; in kindness to an old friend, Mr. Davis finally said I had better make room for the General, and he himself took one of the daughters to share his own seat. That young lady was of a loquacity irrepressible; she plied her neighbor diligently—about the weather, and upon every other topic of common interest—asking him, too, a thousand trivial questions. The train could not yet be got to move; the fires in the locomotive wouldn't burn well, or some other difficulty delayed us; and there we all were, in our seats, crowded together, waiting to be off, full of gloom at the situation, wondering what would happen next, and all as silent as mourners at a funeral; all except, indeed, the General's daughter, who prattled on in a voice everybody heard. She seemed quite unconscious of the impatience Mr. Davis evidently to everybody else, felt for her and her conversation. In the midst of it all, a sharp explosion occurred very near the President, and a young man was seen to bounce into the air, clapping both hands to the seat of his trousers. We all sprang to our feet in alarm, but presently found that it was only an officer of General R——'s staff, who had sat down rather abruptly upon the flat top of a stove (still standing in the car, but without a fire), and that the explosion was made by one of the torpedo appliances he was carrying in his coat-tail pocket.

Among the servants at the President's house in Richmond had been one called Spencer. He was the slave of somebody in the town, but made himself a member of our household, and couldn't be got rid of. Spencer was inefficient, unsightly, and unclean,—a black Caliban,—and had the manners of a corn-field dorky. He always called Mr. Davis "Marse Jeff," and was the only one of the domestics who used that style of address. I fancy the amusement Mr. Davis felt at that was the real explanation of the continued sufferance extended to the fellow by the family for a year or more. Spencer would often go to the door to answer the bell, and almost invariably denied that Mr. Davis was at home. The visitor sometimes entered the hall, notwithstanding, and asked to have his name sent up; whereupon Spencer generally lost his temper and remarked, "I tell you,

sir, Marse Jeff 'clines to see you"; and unless somebody came to the rescue, the intruder rarely got any further. This Spencer had accompanied the party from Richmond to Danville, but had made the journey in a box-car with a drunken officer, who beat him. The African was overwhelmed with disgust at such treatment, and announced in Danville that he should go no further if ——— was to be of the party. When he had learned, however, that his enemy (being in a delirium and unable to be moved) was to be left behind at Danville, Spencer cheerfully reported at the train, and asked for transportation. I assigned him to a box-car with the parcels of fuses, etc., put aboard by General R——; and he had not yet made himself comfortable there, when somebody mischievously told him those things would certainly explode and blow him to "kingdom come." The dorky fled immediately, and demanded of me other quarters. I told him he couldn't travel in any other car; and that, happily, relieved us of his company. Mournfully remarking, "Den Marse Jeff 'll have to take keer of hisself," Spencer, the valiant and faithful, bade me good-bye, and said he should return to Richmond!

We halted for several days at Greensboro' for consultation with General Joseph E. Johnston, whose army was then confronting Sherman. The people in that part of North Carolina had not been zealous supporters of the Confederate Government; and, so long as we remained in the State, we observed their indifference to what should become of us. It was rarely that anybody asked one of us to his house; and but few of them had the grace even to explain their fear that, if they entertained us, their houses would be burned by the enemy, when his cavalry should get there.

During the halt at Greensboro' most of us lodged day and night in the very uncomfortable railway cars we had arrived in. The possessor of a large house in the town, and perhaps the richest and most conspicuous of the residents, came indeed effusively to the train, but carried off only Mr. Trenholm, the Secretary of the Treasury. This hospitality was explained by the information that the host was the alarmed owner of many of the bonds, and of much of the currency, of the Confederate States, and that he hoped to cajole the Secretary into exchanging a part of the "Treasury gold" for some of those securities. It appeared that we were reputed to have many millions of gold with us. Mr. Trenholm was ill during most or all of the time at the house of his

warm-hearted host, and the symptoms were said to be greatly aggravated, if not caused, by importunities with regard to that gold.

Colonel John Taylor Wood, of our staff, had, some time before, removed his family to Greensboro' from Richmond, and took the President (who would otherwise have probably been left with us in the cars) to share his quarters near by. The Woods were boarding, and their rooms were few and small. The entertainment they were able to offer their guest was meager, and was distinguished by very little comfort either to him or to them, the people of the house continually and vigorously insisting to the colonel and his wife, the while, that Mr. Davis must go away, saying they were unwilling to have the vengeance of Stoneman's cavalry brought upon them by his presence in their house.

The alarm of these good people was not allayed when they ascertained, one day, that General Joseph E. Johnston, with General Breckinridge (Secretary of War), General Beauregard, Mr. Benjamin (Secretary of State), Mr. Mallory (Secretary of the Navy), Mr. Reagan (Postmaster-General), and perhaps one or two other members of the cabinet and officers of the army, were with the President, in Colonel Wood's rooms, holding a council of war.

That route through North Carolina had been for some time the only line of communication between Virginia and Georgia and the Gulf States. The roads and towns were full of officers and privates from those Southern States, belonging to the Army of Northern Virginia. Many of them had been home on furlough, and were returning to the army when met by the news of General Lee's surrender; others were stragglers from their commands. All were now going home, and, as some of the bridges south of Greensboro' had been burned by the enemy's cavalry, and the railways throughout the southern country generally were interrupted, of course everybody wanted the assistance of a horse or mule on his journey. Few had any scruples as to how to get one.

I remember that a band of eight or ten young Mississippians, at least one of them an officer (now a prominent lawyer in New Orleans), and several of them personally known to me, offered themselves at Greensboro' as an escort for the President. Until something definite should be known, however, as to our future movements, I was unable to say whether they could be of service in that capacity. After several days of waiting, they decided for themselves. Arousing me in the small hours of the night, their self-constituted commander said

if I had any orders or suggestions to give they should be glad to have them on the spot, as, otherwise, it had become expedient to move on immediately. I asked what had happened. He showed me the horses they had that night secured by "pressing" them from neighboring farmers, and particularly his own mount, a large and handsome dapple-gray stallion, in excellent condition. I congratulated him on his thrift, and in an instant they were off in a gallop through the mud. The President's horses, my own, and those belonging to the other gentlemen of our immediate party, were tied within a secure inclosure while we remained at Greensboro', and were guarded by the men (about a dozen) who, having received wounds disabling them for further service in the field, had acted as sentinels during the last year at the President's house in Richmond, under the command of a gallant young officer who had lost an arm.

The utmost vigilance was necessary, from this time on, in keeping possession of a good horse. I remember that at Charlotte, some days later, Colonel Burnett, senator from Kentucky, told me he had just come very near losing his mare. He had left her for a little while at a large stable where there were many other horses. Going back after a short absence, Burnett noticed a rakish-looking fellow walking along the stalls, and carefully observing the various horses until he came to the mare, when, after a moment's consideration, he called out to a negro rubbing down a neighboring horse: "Boy, saddle my mare here; and be quick about it." The negro answered, "Aye, aye, sir," and was about to obey, when the senator stepped up, saying: "My friend, you are evidently a judge of horseflesh; and I feel rather complimented that, after looking through the whole lot, you have selected my mare!" The chap coolly replied, "Oh! is that your mare, Colonel?" and walked off. When we had laughed over the story, I asked Burnett, "Well, and where is she now?" "Oh," said he, "I sha'n't trust her out of my sight again; and Gus Henry is holding her for me down at the corner until I can get back there." The person thus familiarly spoken of as "Gus" Henry, then acting as a hostler for his friend, was the venerable and distinguished senator from Tennessee, with all of the stateliness and much of the eloquence of his kinsman, Patrick Henry, the great orator of Virginia.

At Greensboro' were large stores of supplies belonging to the quartermaster and commissary departments. These were to be kept together until it could be ascertained whether General Johnston's army would need them. I recollect, as one of the incidents of

our sojourn there, that, after many threats during several days to do so, a formidable attack was made by men belonging to a cavalry regiment upon one of the depots where woolen cloths (I think) were stored. They charged down the road in considerable force, with yells and an occasional shot; but the "Home Guards," stationed at the store-house, stood firm, and received the attack with a well directed volley. I saw a number of saddles emptied, and the cavalry retreat in confusion. Notwithstanding the utmost vigilance of the officers, however, pilfering from the stores went on briskly all the time; and I fancy that, immediately after we left, there was a general scramble for what remained of the supplies.

From Greensboro', at this time, a railway train was dispatched toward Raleigh with a number of prisoners, to be exchanged, if possible, for some of our own men then in General Sherman's hands. They were in charge of Major William H. Norris, of Baltimore (Chief of the Signal Corps), and Major W. D. Hennen. The latter had, before the war, been a distinguished member of the New Orleans bar, and has since been at the bar in New York. Those two officers were at Yale College together in their youth, and had shared in many a frolic in Paris and other gay places. They evidently regarded this expedition with the prisoners as a huge "lark." The train moved off with a flag of truce flying from the locomotive. When, a day or two afterward, they approached the enemy's lines, the prisoners all got out of the cars and ran off to their friends, and Norris and Hennen were themselves made prisoners! Indignant at such treatment, they addressed a communication to the commanding officer (Schofield, I think), demanding to know why they were treated as prisoners, and why their flag had not been respected. Schofield considered the Confederate Government was now no more, and asked what flag they referred to. This gave Hennen a great opportunity, and he overpowered the enemy with a reply full of his most fervid eloquence. "What flag? The flag before which the 'star-spangled banner' has been ignominiously trailed in the dust of a thousand battle-fields! The flag that has driven from the ocean the commerce of the United States! The flag which will live in history as long as the heroic achievements of patriotic men are spoken of among the nations! The glorious, victorious, and immortal flag of the Confederate States of America!"

We moved southward on, I think, the day following the council of war held with General Johnston, starting from Greensboro' in

the afternoon. The President, those of us who constituted his immediate staff, and some members of the cabinet, were mounted. Others rode in ambulances, army wagons, or such conveyances as could be got. Almost at the last minute I was told I must provide an ambulance for Mr. Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State. His figure was not well adapted for protracted riding, and he had firmly announced that he should not mount a horse until obliged to.*

By good fortune, I was able to secure an ambulance; but the horses were old and broken down, of a dirty gray color, and with spots like fly-bites all over them,—and the harness was not good. There was no choice, however, and into that ambulance got Mr. Benjamin, General Samuel Cooper (Adjutant General, and ranking officer of the whole army), Mr. George Davis (of North Carolina, Attorney-General), and Mr. Jules St. Martin, Benjamin's brother-in-law.

By the time they got off, the front of our column had been some time in motion, and the President had ridden down the road. Heavy rains had recently fallen, the earth was saturated with water, the soil was a sticky red clay, the mud was awful, and the road, in places, almost impracticable. The wheeled vehicles could move but slowly; and it was only by sometimes turning into the fields and having St. Martin and the Attorney-General get out to help the horses with an occasional fence-rail under the axles, that their party got along at all—so difficult was the road because of the mud, and so formidable were the holes made during the winter, and deepened by the artillery and heavy wagons that day. I was near them from time to time, and rendered what assistance I could. Darkness came on after awhile, and nearly or quite everybody in the column passed ahead of that ambulance. Having been kept latterly in the rear by something detaining me, I observed, as I rode

* That he could handle a steed in an emergency was very well known, and was afterward shown when he dexterously got himself into the saddle upon a tall horse, and, with short legs hanging but an inconsiderable distance toward the ground, rode gayly off with the others of the President's following until, after their night march from Abbeville, South Carolina, across the Savannah River, sniffing the danger of longer continuance with so large a party, he set out alone for the sea-coast, whence he escaped (to Bermuda and Havana, I think, and finally) to England. I am told that in his pocket, when he started, was a document from one of the assistants to the adjutant-general of the army, certifying the bearer to be a French citizen, entitled to travel without hindrance, and ordering all Confederate officers and pickets to let him pass freely; and that it was understood that if he should encounter inquisitive detachments of the United States forces, he was to be unable to talk any other language than French, which he speaks like a native. So long as he remained with us his cheery good humor, and readiness to adapt

forward, the tilted hind-part of an ambulance stuck in the mud in the middle of the road, and recognized the voices inside, as I drew rein for a moment to chuckle at their misfortunes. The horses were blowing like two rusty fog-horns; Benjamin was scolding the driver for not going on; that functionary was stoically insisting they could proceed no whit further, because the horses were broken down; and General Cooper (faithful old gentleman, he had been in Richmond throughout our war, and had not known since the Seminole war what it is to "rough it") was grumbling about the impudence of a subordinate officer ("only a brigadier-general, sir"). It seems the offender had thrust himself into the seat in another ambulance drawn by good horses, that was intended for the Adjutant-General. Getting alongside, I could see the front wheels were over the hubs in a hole; the hind legs of the horses were in the same hole, up to the hocks; and the feet of the driver hung down almost into the mud. Mud and water were deep all around them, and their plight was pitiful indeed! They plucked up their spirits only when I offered to get somebody to pull them out. Riding forward, I found an artillery camp, where some of the men volunteered to go back with horses and haul the ambulance up the hill; and, returning to them again, I could see from afar the occasional bright glow of Benjamin's cheerful cigar. While the others of the party were perfectly silent, Benjamin's silvery voice was presently heard as he rhythmically intoned, for their comfort, verse after verse of Tennyson's ode on the death of the Duke of Wellington! The laureate would have enjoyed the situation could he have heard the appreciative rendering of his noble poem—under the circumstances of that moment!

Reaching the house at the top of the hill, we halted on hearing that the President himself to the requirements of all emergencies, made him a most agreeable comrade. He is now a Queen's Counsel in London, and has just retired from the active work of a great and lucrative practice in all the courts there, after a career of singular interest. He was born, in 1812, in one of the British West India possessions, the ship, conveying his parents to this country from England, having put in there on learning at sea of the declaration of war by the United States. At Yale College when a boy; at the bar in New Orleans; in the Senate of the United States, from Louisiana; at first attorney-general, next secretary of war, and finally secretary of state of the Confederate States, at Richmond. When he was recently entertained at dinner, in the beautiful Inner Temple Hall (surrounded by the portraits of the most illustrious of those who have given dignity to the profession in the past), the bench and bar of the United Kingdom were assembled to do him special honor; about two hundred sat at the table; the Attorney-General presided, as leader of the bar of England; the Lord Chancellor and the Lord

and his party, including General Breckinridge, were the guests of the hospitable owner, and that we were expected to join them. There we had the first good meal encountered since leaving Virginia, and when bed-time came a great bustling was made to enable us all to sleep within doors, though the house was too small to afford many beds. A big negro man, with a candle in hand, then came into the room where we were gathered about a huge fire. Looking us over, he solemnly selected General Cooper, and, with much deference, escorted him into the "guest-chamber" through a door opening from the room we occupied. We could see the great soft bed and snowy white linen the old gentleman was to enjoy, and all rejoiced in the comfort they promised to aged bones, that for a week had been racked in the cars. The negro gravely shut the door upon his guest, and, walking through our company, disappeared. He came back after awhile with wood for our fire; and one of us asked him, "Aren't you going to give the President a room?" "Yes, sir, I done put him in thar," pointing to the "guest-chamber," where General Cooper was luxuriating in delights procured for him by the mistaken notion of the dorky that he was Mr. Davis! The President and one or two others were presently provided for elsewhere, and the rest of us bestowed ourselves to slumber on the floor, before the roaring fire. A better team for Benjamin's party was furnished next morning; and, just as we were about to start, our host generously insisted upon presenting to Mr. Davis a filly, already broken to saddle. She was a beauty, and the owner had kept her locked for several days in the cellar, the only place he considered safe against horse-thieves.

The next night we bivouacked in a pine grove near Lexington, and were overtaken there by dispatches from General Joseph E. Johnston, with information of his arrange-

Chief Justice were among those who spoke to toasts, and if there was any speech more graceful and striking than those made by them, it was the reply of Mr. Benjamin himself, with singular modesty and felicity, to the words of praise he had just heard from the eloquent Attorney-General. Lord Chancellor Selborne then said of him: "If I had to speak of Mr. Benjamin only as an English barrister, as I have known him from the bench, I should say that no man, within my recollection, has possessed greater learning, or displayed greater shrewdness or ability, or greater zeal for the interests intrusted to him, than he has exhibited. (Cheers.) To these high qualities he has united one still higher—the highest sense of honor, united with the greatest kindness and generosity (cheers), and the greatest geniality in his intercourse with all the branches of the profession. (Loud cheers.) That we should no longer have the benefit of his assistance and the light of his example, is a loss to us all. (Cheers.)"

ment for negotiations with General Sherman. General Breckinridge and Mr. Reagan (the Postmaster-General) were thereupon directed by the President to proceed immediately to General Johnston's head-quarters for consultation with that officer, and with large discretion as to what should be agreed to. They set off instantly.

In Lexington and in Salisbury we experienced the same cold indifference on the part of the people, first encountered at Greensboro', except that at Salisbury Mr. Davis was invited to the house of a clergyman, where he slept. Salisbury had been entered a few days before by a column of the enemy's cavalry (said to be Stoneman's), and the streets showed many evidences of the havoc they had wrought. With one or two others, I passed the night on the clergyman's front piazza as a guard for the President.

During all this march Mr. Davis was singularly equable and cheerful; he seemed to have had a great load taken from his mind, to feel relieved of responsibilities, and his conversation was bright and agreeable. He talked of men and of books, particularly of Walter Scott and Byron; of horses and dogs and sports; of the woods and the fields; of trees and many plants; of roads, and how to make them; of the habits of birds, and of a variety of other topics. His familiarity with, and correct taste in, the English literature of the last generation, his varied experiences in life, his habits of close observation, and his extraordinary memory, made him a charming companion when disposed to talk.

Indeed, like Mark Tapley, we were all in good spirits under adverse circumstances; and I particularly remember the entertaining conversation of Mr. Mallory, the Secretary of the Navy.

Not far from Charlotte, I sent forward a courier with a letter to Major Echols, the quartermaster of that post, asking him to inform Mrs. Davis of our approach, and to provide quarters for as many of us as possible. The major rode out to the outskirts of the town, and there met us with the information that Mrs. Davis and her family had hastily proceeded toward South Carolina several days before. He didn't know where she was to be found; but said she had fled when the railway south of Greensboro' had been cut by the enemy's cavalry. The major then took me aside and explained that, though quarters could be furnished for the rest of us, he had as yet been able to find only one person willing to receive Mr. Davis, saying the people generally were afraid that whoever entertained him would have his house burned by the enemy; that, indeed, it was understood threats to that effect

had been made everywhere by Stoneman's cavalry.

There seemed to be nothing to do but to go to the one domicile offered. It was on the main street of the town, and was occupied by Mr. Bates, a man said to be of northern birth, a bachelor of convivial habits, the local agent of the Southern Express Company, apparently living alone with his negro servants, and keeping a sort of "open house," where a broad, well equipped sideboard was the most conspicuous feature of the situation—not at all a seemly place for Mr. Davis.

Just as we had entered the house, Mr. Davis received by courier from General Breckinridge, at General Sherman's headquarters, the intelligence that President Lincoln had been assassinated; and, when he communicated it to us, everybody's remark was that, in Lincoln, the Southern States had lost their only refuge in their then emergency. There was no expression other than of surprise and regret. As yet, we knew none of the particulars of the crime.

Presently, the street was filled by a column of cavalry (the command, I think, of General Basil Duke, of Kentucky) just entering the town. As they rode past the house, the men waved their flags and hurraed for "Jefferson Davis." Many of them halted before the door, and, in dust and uproar, called loudly for a speech from him. I was in the crowd, gathered thick about the steps, and not more than ten feet from the door. Mr. Davis stood on the threshold and made a very brief reply to their calls for a speech. I distinctly heard every word he said. He merely thanked the soldiers for their cordial greetings; paid a high compliment to the gallantry and efficiency of the cavalry from the State in which the regiment before him had been recruited; expressed his own determination not to despair of the Confederacy, but to remain with the last organized band upholding the flag; and then excused himself from further remarks, pleading the fatigue of travel. He said nothing more. Somebody else (Mr. Johnson, I think, a prominent resident there) read aloud the dispatch from General Breckinridge about the assassination of President Lincoln, but no reference was made to it in Mr. Davis's speech. There was no other speech, and the crowd soon dispersed.*

Colonel John Taylor Wood, Colonel Will-

* In pursuance of the scheme of Stanton and Holt to fasten upon Mr. Davis charges of a guilty foreknowledge of, if not participation in, the murder of Mr. Lincoln, Bates was afterward carried to Washington and made to testify (before the military tribunal, I believe, where the murderers were on trial) to something about that speech.

As I recollect the reports of the testimony, published

iam Preston Johnston, and Colonel Frank R. Lubbock, staff officers, remained in Bates's house with the President. There was no room for more. I was carried off by my Hebrew friend Weil and most kindly entertained, with Mr. Benjamin and St. Martin, at his residence.

On Sunday (the next day, I think), a number of us attended service at the Episcopal Church, and heard the rector preach vigorously about the sad condition of the country, and in reprobation of the folly and wickedness of the assassination of President Lincoln. As Mr. Davis walked away, after the sermon, with Colonel Johnston and me, he said, with a smile, "I think the preacher directed his remarks at me; and he really seems to fancy I had something to do with the assassination." The suggestion was absurd. No man ever participated in a great war of revolution with less of disturbance of the nicest sense of perfect rectitude in conduct or opinion; his every utterance, act, and sentiment was with the strictest regard for all the moralities, throughout that troubled time when the passions of many people made them reckless or defiant of the opinions of mankind.

His cheerfulness continued in Charlotte, and I remember his there saying to me, "*I cannot* feel like a beaten man!" The halt at Charlotte was to await information from the army of General Johnston. After a few days, the President became nervously anxious about his wife and family. He had as yet heard nothing of their whereabouts, but asked me to proceed into South Carolina in search of them, suggesting that I should probably find them at Abbeville. He told me I must rely on my own judgment as to what course to pursue from there; that, for himself, he should make his way as rapidly as possible to the Trans-Mississippi Department, to join the army under Kirby Smith.

I started at once, taking my horse on the railway train to Chester. On the train chanced to be Captain Lingan, an officer from New Orleans, recently serving at Richmond as an assistant to the commissioner for the exchange of prisoners. He had his horse with him, and from Chester we rode together

across the country to Newberry, there to take the train again for Abbeville. In Chester the night was spent in the car that brought us there. On the march to Newberry we bivouacked. The weather was fine, and the houses surrounded by jessamines and other flowers. The people were very hospitable, and we vain to rely upon them. Nothing could be bought, because we had no money. Our Confederate currency was of no value now, and there was no other. Riding through a street of Newberry in search of the quartermaster's stable, Lingan and I were saluted by a lady, inquiring eagerly whence we had come, what the news was, and whether we knew anything of Mr. Trenholm, adding she had heard he was ill. The town was lovely, and this the most attractive house we had seen there. It had a broad piazza, with posts beautifully overgrown by vines and rose-bushes, and the grounds around were full of flowers. I replied I had just left Mr. Trenholm in Charlotte; that he had somewhat recovered; and that, if she would allow us to do so, we should be happy to return, after providing for our horses, and tell her the latest news. As we rode off, Lingan laughingly said, "Well, that secures us 'hospitable entertainment.'" And, sure enough, when we went back and introduced ourselves, we were cordially received by the mistress of the house, who invited us to dine. The lady we had seen on the piazza was only a visitor there for the moment. It was the residence of Mr. Boyd, the president of a bank, and when that gentleman presently came in he courteously insisted upon our making his house our home. An excellent dinner was served, and I was given what seemed to me the most delightful bed ever slept in. After a delicious breakfast next morning, Mrs. Boyd dispatched us to the train with a haversack full of bounties for the rest of the journey.

At Abbeville, Mrs. Davis and her family were the guests of the President's esteemed friends, Colonel and Mrs. Burt; and there, too, were the daughters of Mr. Trenholm, at the house of their brother. Abbeville was a beautiful place, on high ground; and the

at the time, they made the witness say that Mr. Davis had approved of the assassination, either explicitly or by necessary implication; and that he had added, "If it was to be done, it is well it was done quickly," or words to that effect. If any such testimony was given, it is false and without foundation; no comment upon or reference to the assassination was made in that speech. I have been told the witness has always stontly insisted he never testified to anything of the kind, but that what he said was altogether perverted in the publication made by rascals in Washington. Colonel William Preston Johnston tells me he has seen another version of the story, and thinks Bates is understood to have fathered it in a publication

made in some newspaper after his visit to Washington; it represents Bates as saying that the words above mentioned as imputed to Mr. Davis were used by him, not, indeed, in the speech I have described, but in a conversation with Johnston at Bates's house. Johnston assures me that, in that shape, too, the story is false—that Mr. Davis never used such words in his presence, or any words at all like them. He adds that Mr. Davis remarked to him, at Bates's house, with reference to the assassination, that Mr. Lincoln would have been much more useful to the Southern States than Andrew Johnson, the successor, was likely to be; and I myself heard Mr. Davis express the same opinion at that period.

people lived in great comfort, their houses embowered in vines and roses, with many other flowers everywhere. We had now entered the "sunny South."

Mrs. Davis insisted upon starting without delay for the sea-coast, to get out of the reach of capture. She and her sister had heard dreadful stories of the treatment ladies had been subjected to in Georgia and the Carolinas by men in Sherman's army, and thought with terror of the possibility of falling into the hands of the enemy; indeed, she understood it to be the President's wish that she should hasten to seek safety in a foreign country. I explained to her the difficulties and hardships of the journey to the sea-coast, and suggested that we might be captured on the road, urging her to remain where she was until the place should be quietly occupied by United States troops, assuring her that some officer would take care that no harm should befall her, and adding that she would then be able to rejoin her friends. Colonel and Mrs. Burt (a niece of John C. Calhoun) added their entreaties to mine; and to her expression of unwillingness to subject them to the danger of having their house burned for sheltering her, Colonel Burt magnanimously replied that there was no better use to which his house could be put than to have it burned for giving shelter to the wife and family of his friend. But she persisted in her purpose, and begged me to be off immediately. It was finally decided to make our way to the neighborhood of Madison, Florida, as fast as possible, there to determine how best to get to sea.

We had no conveyance for the ladies, however, and were at a loss how to get one, until somebody told me that General John S. Williams, of Kentucky (now United States Senator from that State) was but a few miles from the town recruiting his health, and that he had a large and strong vehicle well adapted to the purpose. I rode out in the direction indicated, and discovered that officer at the house of a man called, queerly enough, "Jeff" Davis. General Williams evidently perceived that, if he allowed his wagon and horses (a fortune in those times) to go beyond his own reach, he would never see them again, such was the disorder throughout the country. But he gallantly devoted them to Mrs. Davis, putting his property at her service as far as Washington, Georgia, and designating the man to bring the wagon and horses back from there, if possible, to him at Abbeville. Whether he ever recovered them I have not learned; but they started back promptly after we had reached Washington.

Among the "refugees" in Abbeville was

the family of Judge Monroe, of Kentucky. At their house were Lieutenant Hathaway, Mr. Monroe, and Mr. Messick,—Kentuckians all, and then absent from their command in the cavalry, on sick leave, I think. These three young gentlemen were well mounted, and volunteered to serve as an escort for Mrs. Davis.

We started the morning of the second day after I arrived at Abbeville, and had not reached the Savannah River when it was reported that small-pox prevailed in the country. All the party had been vaccinated except one of the President's children. Halting at a house near the road, Mrs. Davis had the operation performed by the planter, who got a fresh scab from the arm of a little negro called up for the purpose.

At Washington, we halted for two nights and the intervening day. Mrs. Davis and her family were comfortably lodged in the town. I was the guest of Dr. Robertson, the cashier of a bank, and living under the same roof with the offices of that institution. Here, too, was my friend Major Thomas W. Hall (now a busy and eminent member of the Baltimore bar), talking rather despondingly of the future, and saying he did not know what he should do with himself. After we had discussed the situation, however, he brightened up, with the remark that he thought he should write a book about the war. I comforted him with the observation that that would be just the thing; and that, as we ought all to have a steady occupation in life, if he would write a book, I should try to read it!

Near the town was a quartermaster's camp, where I selected three or four army wagons, each with a team of four good mules, and the best harness to be got. A driver for each team, and several supernumeraries, friends of theirs, were recruited there, with the promise, on my part, that the wagons and mules should be divided between them when at our journey's end. These men were all, I believe, from southern Mississippi, and, by volunteering with us, were not going far out of their own way home.

It was night-fall when these arrangements were completed, and I immediately moved my teams and wagons to a separate bivouac in the woods, apart; a wise precaution, for, during the night, some men, on the way to their homes in the far South-west, "raided" the quartermaster's camp and carried off all the best mules found there. Senator Wigfall, of Texas, had allowed to remain in the camp some mules he intended for his own use; the next day they were all missing.*

* A story told afterward well illustrates Wigfall's audacity, resources, and wit. It seems that he made

Into the wagons, next morning, we put Mrs. Davis's luggage, a few muskets with ammunition, two light tents for the ladies and children, and utensils for cooking, with supplies for ourselves and feed for the animals supposed to be sufficient to take us to Madison. As most of the country we were to pass through had been recently devastated by Sherman's army, or was pine woods, sparsely inhabited, these things were necessary.

We had expected to leave Washington with only the party we arrived with, consisting of Mrs. Davis, Miss Howell, the four children, Ellen, James Jones with the two carriage horses, the three Kentuckians, and myself,—adding only the teamsters. But, at Washington we were acceptably reinforced by Captain Moody, of Port Gibson, Mississippi, and Major Victor Maurin, of Louisiana. Both had served with the artillery in Virginia, had been home on leave, and had reached Augusta, Georgia, on their return to duty. Hearing there of the surrender of the army, they set out for home together, and met us at Washington, where Captain Moody kindly placed his light, covered wagon at the service of Mrs. Davis; and he and Major Maurin joined our party as an additional escort for her. Captain Moody had with him, I think, a negro servant.

In Washington, at that time, were Judge Crump, of Richmond (Assistant Secretary of the Treasury), and several of his clerks. They had been sent by Mr. Trenholm in advance, with some of the (not very large amount of) gold brought out of Richmond. The specie was in the vaults of the bank at Washington, and I did not hear of it until late at night. We were to start in the morning; and, as nobody in our party had a penny of the money needed to prosecute the intended exit from the country, I was determined to get some of that gold.

One of the Treasury clerks went with me to the house where Judge Crump was; we got him out of bed; and, after a long argument and much entreaty, the Assistant Secretary gave me an order for a few hundred

his way as best he could to Vicksburg, and there, mingling with a large number of paroled soldiers returning to the Trans-Mississippi, and having in his pocket a borrowed "parole paper," certifying the bearer to be "Private Smith," availed himself of the transportation furnished by the United States quartermaster to such prisoners, by steam-boat, I think, to Shreveport. On the voyage he had a discussion with some of the guard as to what should be done by the Government with the secession leaders. "And as to Wigfall," said one of the men, in excitement, "if we catch *him*, we shall hang him immediately." "*There I agree with you*," remarked Private Smith, "I would serve *him* right; and, if I were there, I should be pulling at the end of *that* rope myself!"

dollars in gold for Mrs. Davis, and one hundred and ten dollars for myself. The amounts were to be charged to the President and me, as upon account of our official salaries. Armed with the order, my friend the clerk got the money for us that night.

The last two people I talked to in Washington were General Robert Toombs, who resides there, and General Humphrey Marshall, of Kentucky.

The latter was enormously fat. He had been in public life for many years, and was one of the notables of his State. As I waited while my horse was shod, he sat down beside me in a door-way on the Square, and, though I was but a slender youth, almost squeezed the breath out of my body in doing so. He discussed the situation, and ended with, "Well, Harrison, in all my days I never knew a government to go to pieces in *this* way," emphasizing the words as though his pathway through life had been strewn with the wrecks of empires, comminuted indeed, but nothing like this! The next time I saw him, we were in New Orleans, in March, 1866. He told me of his adventures in escaping from Georgia across the Mississippi River. The waters were in overflow, and made the distance to be rowed, where he crossed, a number of miles. He said he was in a "dug-out" (a boat made of a single large log, with a cylindrical bottom and easily upset), and that the boatman made him lie down, for fear they might be seen by the enemy and he recognized by his great size, and so captured. All went well until the mosquitoes swarmed on him, and nearly devoured him in his fear of capsize if he ventured to adopt effective measures to beat them off! In this connection, I remember that, when Marshall commanded a brigade in the mountains of East Tennessee and Kentucky, he was warned that the mountaineers, Union men, all knew him because of his size, and that some sharp-shooter would be sure to single him out and pick him off. He replied: "Ah! but I have taken precautions against that. I have a fat staff! There be six Richmonds in the field!"

As I rode out of Washington to overtake my wagons, then already started, I saw General Toombs, and sung out "Good-bye" to him. He was dressed in an ill-cut black Websterian coat, the worse for wear, and had on a broad-brimmed shabby hat. Standing beside an old buggy, drawn by two ancient gray horses, he told me he was going to Crawfordville to have a talk with "Aleck" Stephens (the Vice-President); and, as I left, the atmosphere was murky with blasphemies and with denunciations of the Yankees! He

had been informed of a detachment of the enemy's cavalry said to be already on the way to capture him, and was about to start for the sea-coast. The next time I saw him, he was at the "Théâtre du Châtelet," in Paris, in August or September, 1866. The spectacle was one of the most splendid ever put upon the stage there, and the French people were in raptures over the dazzling beauty of the scene. Toombs, fashionably dressed, sat in an orchestra chair, regarding it all with the stolid composure of an Indian, and with an expression of countenance suggesting that he had a thousand times seen spectacles more brilliant in Washington, Georgia.

From Washington we went along the road running due south. We had told nobody our plans; though, starting as we did, in the broad light of the forenoon, everybody saw, of course, the direction taken. Our teamsters were instructed not to say anything, to anybody whatever, as to who we were or whence we came or whither we were going. They were all old soldiers and obeyed orders. It frequently amused me to hear their replies to the country people, during the next few days, when questioned on these matters.

"Who is that lady?"

"Mrs. Jones."

"Where did you come from?"

"Up the road."

"Where are you going to?"

"Down the road a bit," etc., etc.

We had not proceeded far when a gentleman of the town, riding rapidly, overtook us with a letter from the President to his wife. It had been written at York, South Carolina, I think; was forwarded by courier to overtake us at Abbeville, and had reached Washington just after we started. It merely informed us that he and his immediate party were well, and that he should probably ride south from Washington to cross the Mississippi, if possible. I think no reply was made by Mrs. Davis to the letter; and, if my memory serves me, we left behind us nothing to advise the President as to where we were going.

That afternoon I was overcome with dysentery and a low fever, and dropped behind for a time, to lie down. When I overtook the party, they had already gone into camp; and, after giving my horse to one of the men, I had hardly strength enough to climb into a wagon, there to pass the night.

The next day we made a long march, and had halted for the night in a pine grove, just after crossing a railway track, when several visitors sauntered into our camp. Presently, one of the teamsters informed me that, while watering his mules near by, he had been told an attempt would be made during the night to

carry off our mules and wagons, and that the visitors were of the party to make the attack. A council of war was held immediately, and we were discussing measures of resistance, when Captain Moody went off for a personal parley with the enemy. He returned to me with the news that the leader of the party was a fellow-Freemason, a Mississippian, and apparently not a bad sort of person. We agreed he had better be informed who we were, relying upon him not to allow an attack upon us after learning that Mrs. Davis and her children were of the party. Captain Moody made that communication in the confidence of Freemasonry, and the gallant Robin Hood immediately approached Mrs. Davis in all courtesy, apologized for having caused her any alarm, assured her she should not be disturbed, and said the raid had been arranged only because it had been supposed we were the party of some quartermasters from Milledgeville, making off with wagons and mules to which he and his men considered their own title as good as that of anybody else. He then left our camp, remarking, however, that, to intercept any attempt at escape during the night, he had already dispatched some of his men to the cross-roads, some distance below, and that we might be halted by them there in the morning; but, to provide for that emergency, he wrote and delivered to Captain Moody a formal "order," entitling us to "pass" his outposts at the cross-roads! The next morning, when we reached the cross-roads, some men were there, evidently intending to intercept us; but—as all the gentlemen of our party were in the saddle, and we appeared to be ready for them—there was no challenge, and we got by without recourse to Robin Hood's "pass."

About the second or third day after that, we were pursued by another party; and one of our teamsters, riding a short distance in the rear of the wagons on the horse of one of the Kentuckians,—the owner having exchanged temporarily for one of the carriage horses, I think,—was attacked, made to dismount, and robbed of his horse, with the information that all the other horses and the mules would be taken during the night. By running a mile or two, the teamster overtook us. It was decided, of course, to prepare for an effective defense. As night came on, we turned off into a side road, and reaching a piece of high ground in the open pine woods, well adapted for our needs, halted—corralling the animals within a space inclosed by the wagons (arranged with the tongue of one wagon fastened by chains or ropes to the tail of another) and placing pickets. About the middle of the night, I, with two

teamsters, constituted the picket on the road running north. After awhile we heard the soft tread of horses in the darkness approaching over the light, sandy soil of the road. The teamsters immediately ran off to arouse the camp, having no doubt the attack was about to begin. I placed myself in the road to detain the enemy as long as possible, and, when the advancing horsemen came near enough to hear me, called "Halt." They drew rein instantly. I demanded "Who comes there?" The foremost of the horsemen replied "Friends," in a voice I was astonished to recognize as that of President Davis, not suspecting he was anywhere near us.

His party then consisted of Colonel William Preston Johnston, Colonel John Taylor Wood, Colonel Frank R. Lubbock, Mr. Reagan, Colonel Charles E. Thorburn (the latter, with a negro servant, had joined them at Greensboro', North Carolina), and Robert (Mr. Davis's own servant). Some scouts were scattered through the country, and were reporting to the President from time to time; but I don't recollect that either of them was with him on the occasion now referred to.

He had happened to join us at all only because some of his staff had heard in the afternoon, from a man on the road-side, that an attempt was to be made in the night to capture the wagons, horses, and mules of a party said to be going south on a road to the eastward. The man spoke of the party to be attacked in terms that seemed to identify us, as we had been described in Washington. The President immediately resolved to find us, and, turning to the east from his own route, rode until after midnight before he overtook us. He explained to us, at the time, how he had tried several roads in the search, and had ridden an estimated distance of sixty miles since mounting in the morning; and said he came to assist in beating off the persons threatening the attack. As we had camped some distance from the main road, he would have passed to the westward of our position, and would probably have had no communication with us and no tidings whatever of us, but for the chance remark about the threatened raid upon our animals. The expected attack was not made.

The President remained with us the rest of that night, rode with us the next day, camped with us the following night, and, after breakfast the day after that, bade us good-bye and rode forward with his own party, leaving us, in deference to our earnest solicitations, to pursue our journey as best we might with our wagons and incumbrances.

He camped that night with his own party at Abbeville, Georgia, personally occupying a deserted house in the outskirts of the village.

As they had reached that place after dark, and a furious rain was falling, but few of the people were aware of his presence, and nobody in the village had had opportunity to identify him.

I halted my party on the western bank of the Ocmulgee River as the darkness came on, immediately after getting the wagons through the difficult bottom-lands on the eastern side, and after crossing the ferry. About the middle of the night I was aroused by a courier sent back by the President with the report that the enemy was at or near Hawkinsville (about twenty-five miles to the north of us), and the advice that I had better move on at once to the southward, though, it was added, the enemy at Hawkinsville seemed to be only intent upon appropriating the quartermaster's supplies supposed to be there. I started my party promptly, in the midst of a terrible storm of thunder, lightning, and rain. As we passed through the village of Abbeville, I dismounted and had a conversation with the President in the old house, where he was lying on the floor wrapped in a blanket. He urged me to move on, and said he should overtake us during the night, after his horses had had more rest. We kept to the southward all night, the rain pouring in torrents most of the time, and the darkness such that, as we went through the woods where the road was not well marked, in a light, sandy soil, but wound about to accommodate the great pines left standing, the wagons were frequently stopped by fallen trees and other obstructions. In such a situation, we were obliged to wait until a flash of lightning enabled the drivers to see the way.

In the midst of that storm and darkness the President overtook us. He was still with us when, about five o'clock in the afternoon (not having stopped since leaving Abbeville, except for the short time, about sunrise, required to cook breakfast), I halted my party for the night, immediately after crossing the little creek just north of Irwinville, and went into camp. My teams were sadly in need of rest, and having now about fifty miles between us and Hawkinsville, where the enemy had been reported to be, and our information being, as stated, that they did not seem to be on the march or likely to move after us, we apprehended no immediate danger. That country is sparsely inhabited, and I do not recollect that we had seen a human being after leaving Abbeville. Colonel Johnston says that he rode on in advance as far as Irwinville, and there found somebody from whom he bought some eggs.

Colonel Thorburn had been, before the war, in the United States navy, and was, I think, a classmate of Colonel Wood in the Naval

Academy at Annapolis. During the first year or two of the war he had served in the army; he afterward became engaged in running the blockade, bringing supplies into the Confederate States. He says he had a small but seaworthy vessel then lying in Indian River, Florida; that his object in joining the party had been to take the President aboard that vessel and convey him thence around to Texas, in case the attempt to get across the Mississippi should for any reason fail or seem unadvisable; and that Colonel Wood and he had arranged that he should, at the proper time, ride on in advance, make all the necessary arrangements for the voyage, and return to Madison, Florida, to await the President there and conduct him aboard the vessel, if necessary. We had all now agreed that, if the President was to attempt to reach the Trans-Mississippi at all, by whatever route, he should move on at once, independent of the ladies and wagons. And when we halted he positively promised me (and Wood and Thorburn tell me he made the same promise to them) that, as soon as something to eat could be cooked, he would say farewell, for the last time, and ride on with his own party, at least ten miles farther before stopping for the night, consenting to leave me and my party to go on our own way as fast as was possible with the now weary mules.

After getting that promise from the President, and arranging the tents and wagons for the night, and without waiting for anything to eat (being still the worse for my dysentery and fever), I lay down upon the ground and fell into a profound sleep. Captain Moody afterward kindly stretched a canvas as a roof over my head, and laid down beside me, though I knew nothing of that until the next day. I was awakened by the coachman, James Jones, running to me about day-break with the announcement that the enemy was at hand! I sprang to my feet, and in an instant a rattling fire of musketry commenced on the north side of the creek. Almost at the same moment Colonel Pritchard and his regiment charged up the road from the south upon us. As soon as one of them came within range, I covered him with my revolver and was about to fire, but lowered the weapon when I perceived the attacking column was so strong as to make resistance useless, and reflected that, by killing the man, I should certainly not be helping ourselves, and might only provoke a general firing upon the members of our party in sight. We were taken by surprise, and not one of us exchanged a shot with the enemy. Colonel Johnston tells me he was the first prisoner taken. In a moment, Colonel Pritchard rode directly to me and,

pointing across the creek, said, "What does that mean? Have you any men with you?" Supposing the firing was done by our teamsters, I replied, "Of course we have—don't you hear the firing?" He seemed to be nettled at the reply, gave the order, "Charge," and boldly led the way himself across the creek, nearly every man in his command following. Our camp was thus left deserted for a few minutes, except by one mounted soldier near Mrs. Davis's tent (who was afterward said to have been stationed there by Colonel Pritchard in passing) and by the few troopers who stopped to plunder our wagons. I had been sleeping upon the same side of the road with the tent occupied by Mrs. Davis, and was then standing very near it. Looking there, I saw her come out and heard her say something to the soldier mentioned; perceiving she wanted him to move off, I approached and actually persuaded the fellow to ride away. As the soldier moved into the road, and I walked beside his horse, the President emerged for the first time from the tent, at the side farther from us, and walked away into the woods to the eastward, and at right angles to the road.

Presently, looking around and observing somebody had come out of the tent, the soldier turned his horse's head and, reaching the spot he had first occupied, was again approached by Mrs. Davis, who engaged him in conversation. In a minute, this trooper was joined by one or perhaps two of his comrades, who either had lagged behind the column and were just coming up the road, or had at that moment crossed over from the other (the west) side, where a few of them had fallen to plundering, as I have stated, instead of charging over the creek. They remained on horseback and soon became violent in their language with Mrs. Davis. The order to "halt" was called out by one of them to the President. It was not obeyed, and was quickly repeated in a loud voice several times. At least one of the men then threatened to fire, and pointed a carbine at the President. Thereupon, Mrs. Davis, overcome with terror, cried out in apprehension, and the President (who had now walked sixty or eighty paces away into the unobstructed woods) turned around and came back rapidly to his wife near the tent. At least one of the soldiers continued his violent language to Mrs. Davis, and the President reproached him for such conduct to her, when one of them, seeing the face of the President, as he stood near and was talking, said, "Mr. Davis, surrender! I recognize you, sir." Pictures of the President were so common that nearly or quite every man in both armies knew his face.

It was, as yet, scarcely daylight.

The President had on a water-proof cloak. He had used it, when riding, as a protection against the rain during the night and morning preceding that last halt; and he had probably been sleeping in that cloak, at the moment when the camp was attacked.

While all these things were happening, Miss Howell and the children remained within the other tent. The gentlemen of our party had, with the single exception of Captain Moody, all slept on the west side of the road and in or near the wagons. They were, so far as I know, paying no attention to what was going on at the tents. I have since talked with Johnston, Wood, and Lubbock, and with others, about these matters; and I have not found there was any one except Mrs. Davis, the single trooper at her tent, and myself, who saw all that occurred and heard all that was said at the time. Any one else who gives an account of it has had to rely upon hearsay or his own imagination for his story.

In a short time after the soldier had recognized the President, Colonel Pritchard and his men returned from across the creek—the battle there ending with the capture by one party of a man belonging to the other, and by the recognition which followed.

They told us that the column, consisting of a detachment of Wisconsin cavalry and another of Michigan cavalry, had been dispatched from Macon in pursuit of us, under the command of Colonel Harnden, of Wisconsin; that when they reached Abbeville, they heard a party of mounted men, with wagons, had crossed the river near there, the night before; that they immediately suspected the identity of the party, and decided to follow it; but that, to make sure of catching us if we had not already crossed the river, Lieutenant-Colonel Pritchard had been posted at the ferry with orders to remain there and capture anybody attempting to pass; that Colonel Harnden, with his Wisconsin men, marched down the direct road we had ourselves taken, and, coming upon us in the night, had halted on the north side of the creek to wait for daylight before making the attack, lest some might escape in the darkness; that Lieutenant-Colonel Pritchard had satisfied himself, by further conversation with the ferry-man, that it was indeed Mr. Davis who had crossed there, and, deciding to be in, if possible, at the capture, had marched as rapidly as he could along the road nearer the river, to the east of and for most of the distance nearly parallel with the route taken by Colonel Harnden; that he reached the cross-roads (Irwinville) in the night, ascertained nobody had passed there for several days, turned north, and found us only a mile and a half up

the road; that, to intercept any attempt at escape, he had dismounted some of his men, and sent them to cross the creek to the westward of us and to post themselves in the road north of our camp; that, as these dismounted men crossed the creek and approached the road, they came upon the Wisconsin troopers, and not being able, in the insufficient light, to distinguish their uniforms, and supposing them to be our escort, opened a brisk fire which was immediately returned; and that, on that signal, Colonel Pritchard and his column charged up the road into our camp, and thence into the thick of the fight. They said that, in the rencontre, a man and, I think, a horse or two were killed, and that an officer and perhaps one or two men were wounded.

During the confusion of the next few minutes, Colonel John Taylor Wood escaped, first inducing the soldier who halted him to go aside into the bushes on the bank of the creek, and there bribing the fellow with some gold to let him get away altogether. As Wood was an officer of the navy, as well as an officer of the army, had commanded cruisers along the Atlantic coast, had captured and sunk a number of New York and New England vessels, and was generally spoken of in the Northern newspapers as a "pirate," he not unnaturally apprehended that, if he remained in the enemy's hands, he would be treated with special severity.

He made his way to Florida, and there met General Breckinridge, with whom (and perhaps one or two others) he sailed down the east coast of the State in a small open boat, and escaped to Cuba. When in London, in September, 1866, I dined with Breckinridge, and had from him the story of their adventures. He said they kept close alongshore, and, frequently landing, subsisted on turtles' eggs found in the sand. When nearing the southern end of the coast, they one day perceived a boat coming to meet them and were at first afraid of capture; but presently, observing that the other boat was so changing its course as to avoid them, they shrewdly suspected it to contain deserters or escaped convicts from the Dry Tortugas, or some such people, who were probably themselves apprehensive of trouble if caught. Wood therefore gave chase immediately, and, having the swifter boat, soon overhauled the other one. The unsatisfactory account the men aboard gave of themselves seemed to confirm the suspicion with regard to their character. The new boat was a better sea-craft than the one our voyagers had, though not so fast a sailer. They were afraid theirs would not take them across the Gulf to Cuba, and so determined to appropriate the other. Turning pirates for the

occasion, they showed their side-arms, put on a bold air, and threatened the rascals with all manner of dreadful things; but finally relented so far as to offer to let them off with an exchange of boats! The victims were delighted with this clemency, and gladly went through what President Lincoln called the dangerous process of "swapping horses while crossing a stream." Each party went on its way rejoicing, and our friends finally, as I have said, reached the coast of Cuba, though almost famished. Indeed, Breckinridge said they were kept alive at all only by a loaf or two of bread kindly given them by a Yankee skipper as they sailed under the stern of his vessel at day-break of the last day of their voyage.

All of the other members of the President's party, except Colonel Thorburn, and all those of my own party, remained as prisoners—unless, indeed, one or two of the teamsters escaped, as to which I do not recollect.

I had been astonished to discover the President still in camp when the attack was made. What I learned afterward explained the mystery. Wood and Thorburn tell me that, after the President had eaten supper with his wife, he told them he should ride on when Mrs. Davis was ready to go to sleep; but that, when bed-time came, he finally said he would ride on in the morning—and so spent the night in the tent. He seemed to be entirely unable to apprehend the danger of capture. Everybody was disturbed at this change of his plan to ride ten miles farther, but he could not be got to move.

Colonel Thorburn decided to start during the night, to accomplish as soon as possible his share of the arrangement for the escape of the party from the sea-coast; and, with his negro boy, he set out alone before day-break. He tells me that, at Irwinville, they ran into the enemy in the darkness, and were fired upon; and that the negro leveled himself on his horse's back, and galloped away like a good fellow into the woods to the east. Thorburn says he turned in the saddle for a moment, shot the foremost of the pursuers, saw him tumble from his horse, and then kept on after the negro. They were chased into the woods, but their horses were fresher than those of the enemy and easily distanced pursuit. Thorburn says he went on to Florida, found his friend Captain Coxsetter at Lake City, ascertained that the vessel was, as expected, in the Indian River and in good condition for the voyage to Texas, arranged with the captain to get her ready for sailing, and then returned to Madison for the rendezvous. There, he says, he learned of Mr. Davis's capture, and, having no further use for the vessel, sent back orders to destroy her.

The business of plundering commenced immediately after the capture; and we were soon left with only what we had on and what we had in our pockets. Several of us rejoiced in some gold; mine was only the one hundred and ten dollars I have mentioned, but Colonel Lubbock and Colonel Johnston had about fifteen hundred dollars each. Lubbock held on to nearly or quite all of his. But Johnston had found the coins an uncomfortable burden when carried otherwise, and had been riding with them in his holsters. There his precious gold was found, and thence it was eagerly taken, by one or more of our captors. His horse and his saddle, with the trappings and pistols, were those his father, General Albert Sydney Johnston, had used at the battle of Shiloh, and were greatly prized. They and all our horses were promptly appropriated by the officers of Col. Pritchard's command; the colonel himself claimed and took the lion's share, including the two carriage-horses, which, as he was told at the time, were the property of Mrs. Davis, having been bought and presented to her by the gentlemen in Richmond upon the occasion already mentioned. Colonel Pritchard also asserted a claim to the horse I had myself ridden, which had stood the march admirably and was fresher and in better condition than the other animals. The colonel's claim to him, however, was disputed by the adjutant, who insisted on the right of first appropriation, and there was a quarrel between those officers on the spot.

While it was going on, I emptied the contents of my haversack into a fire where some of the enemy were cooking breakfast, and there saw the papers burn. They were chiefly love-letters, with a photograph of my sweetheart,—though with them chanced to be a few telegrams and perhaps some letters relating to public affairs, of no special interest.

After we had had breakfast, it was arranged that each of the prisoners should ride his own horse to Macon, the captors kindly consenting to waive right of possession meantime; and that arrangement was carried out, except that Mr. Davis traveled in one of the ambulances.

We marched in a column of twos, and Major Maurin and I rode together. He was very taciturn; but when, on the second or third day, we came upon a cavalry camp where a brass-band, in a large wagon drawn by handsome horses, was stationed by the road-side, and suddenly struck up "*Yankee Doodle*" as the ambulance containing Mr. Davis came abreast of it, the silent old Creole was moved to speech. The startling burst of music set our horses to prancing. When Major Maurin

had composed his steed, he turned to me with a broad smile and revenged himself with: "I remember the last time I heard *that* tune; it was at the battle of Fredericksburg, when a brass-band came across the pontoon bridge with the column and occupied a house within range of my guns, where they began 'Yankee Doodle.' I myself sighted a field-piece at the house, missed it with the first shot, but next time hit it straight. In all your life you never heard 'Yankee Doodle' stop so short as it did then!"

It was at that cavalry camp we first heard of the proclamation offering a reward of \$100,000 for the capture of Mr. Davis, upon the charge, invented by Stanton and Holt, of participation in the plot to murder Mr. Lincoln. Colonel Pritchard had himself just received it, and considerately handed a printed copy of the proclamation to Mr. Davis, who read it with a composure unruffled by any feeling other than scorn. The money was, several years later, paid to the captors. Stanton and Holt, lawyers both, very well knew that Mr. Davis could never be convicted upon an indictment for treason, but were determined to hang him anyhow, and were in search of a pretext for doing so.

The march to Macon took four days. As we rode up to the head-quarters of General Wilson there, an orderly (acting, as he said, under directions of the adjutant) seized my rein before I had dismounted, and led off my horse the moment I was out of the saddle. When, that afternoon, we were sent to the station to take the railway train arranged to convey the prisoners to Augusta, on our way to Fortress Monroe, the horses of all or most of the officers of our party were standing in front of the hotel, and the several ex-owners rode them to the station. My horse was not there, and I had to go to the station afoot.

Several years afterward, on the grand stand at the Jerome Park race-course, in New York, I met Colonel ———, from whom, in Danville, Virginia, I had got the horse under the circumstances narrated. He told me he was in that part of Georgia shortly after our capture, and said the quarrel between Colonel Pritchard and his adjutant, as to

who should have my horse, waxed so hot at Macon that the adjutant, fearing he would not be able to keep the horse himself, and determined Colonel Pritchard should not have him, ended the dispute by drawing his revolver and shooting the gallant steed dead.

At General Wilson's head-quarters in Macon, I met General Croxton, of Kentucky, one of Wilson's brigadiers, who had been two classes ahead of me at Yale College. He received me with expressions of great friendship; said he should have a special outlook for my comfort while a prisoner; and told me that it was at his suggestion that Harnden and Pritchard had been dispatched to intercept Mr. Davis at the crossing of the Ocmulgee River at Abbeville—having heard from some of the Confederate cavalry who had been disbanded at Washington, Georgia, each with a few dollars in silver in his pocket, that the President had ridden south from that place.

HAD MR. DAVIS continued his journey, without reference to us, after crossing the Ocmulgee River, or had he ridden on after getting supper with our party the night we halted for the last time; had he gone but five miles beyond Irwinnville, passing through that village at night, and so avoiding observation, there is every reason to suppose that he and his party would have escaped either across the Mississippi or through Florida to the sea-coast, as Mr. Benjamin escaped, as General Breckinridge escaped, and as others did. It was the apprehension he felt for the safety of his wife and children which brought about his capture. And, looking back now, it must be thought by everybody to have been best that he did not then escape from the country.

To have been a prisoner in the hands of the Government of the United States, and not to have been brought to trial upon any of the charges against him, is sufficient refutation of them all. It indicates that the people in Washington knew the accusations could not be sustained. * * * * *

Burton N. Harrison.



Jefferson Davis and General Holt.

IN THE CENTURY for November is an article, "The Capture of Jefferson Davis," by Mr. Burton N. Harrison. The following phrases and sentences are to be found in this article: In a note by the author, on page 136 of the magazine: " * * * The scheme of Stanton and Holt to fasten upon Mr. Davis charges of a guilty foreknowledge of, if not participation in, the murder of Mr. Lincoln." And in the text, on page 145: "Stanton and Holt, lawyers both, very well knew that Mr. Davis could never be convicted on an indictment for treason, but were determined to hang him anyhow, and were in search of a pretext for doing so. * * * To have been a prisoner in the hands of the Government of the United States, and not to have been brought to trial upon any of the charges against him, is sufficient refutation of them all. It indicates that the people in Washington knew the accusations could not be sustained."

Now, I can safely leave the defense of Secretary Stanton to abler pens than mine. But I hold—contrary, I know, to the usual opinion—that the dead, whose time of action is past, stand less in need of vindication than the living. Therefore, I wish to speak as to the charges made by Mr. Harrison against General Holt; yet not with my own mouth; for it strikes me that the fitting answer to them is found in General Holt's own statement concerning another matter, published within the month, but before Mr. Harrison's paper was given to the public.

General Holt, in this statement (a reply, in the form of a letter published in the "Philadelphia Press," under the date of October 8th, to an attack upon him by the ex-conspirator, Mr. Jacob Thompson), speaks as follows concerning the actions of a certain Sanford Conover, first known to the General and the public as a witness in the trial of the assassins of President Lincoln (though Conover's testimony concerned not those conspirators executed for that crime, but others who were never brought to trial):

"In July, after the trial, Conover addressed a written communication to me from New York, of which the following is the opening paragraph:

"NEW-YORK, July 26, 1865.

"BRIG.-GEN. HOLT:

"*Dear Sir:* Believing that I can procure witnesses and documentary evidence sufficient to convict Jeff. Davis and C. C. Clay of complicity in the assassination of the President, and that I can also find and secure John H. Surratt, I beg leave to tender the Government, through you, my services for these purposes. * * *

"On the second of August following," General Holt continues, "another letter to the same effect, but more urgent, was received from him [Conover], and, after a conference with the Secretary of War, with his full approval the proposal was accepted, and Conover entered on the fulfillment of his engagement. Some six or seven months were occupied in this, and after all the witnesses produced by him—none of whom were known to me—had been examined, and their depositions filed in the Bureau of Military Justice, Conover, under the supervision of the Secretary of War, was allowed a compensation, which, with what he had previously received, was deemed just, and no more, for his services,—such sums as were required for the attendance of the witnesses themselves having been before paid out from

time to time. Conover himself gave no deposition. In this there was no departure from the course habitually pursued by all the departments of the Government. * * * At this time, nothing had occurred to excite the slightest suspicion of Conover's integrity in all that he had done, or in the credibility of his witnesses. Some time afterward, two of these witnesses, conscience-stricken, came and confessed that they had sworn falsely, having been suborned to do so by Conover. Investigation satisfied me that they were sincere in their avowals, and without delay appropriate action was taken. A prosecution was set on foot against Conover, and he was convicted and sent to the penitentiary for perjury and subornation of perjury, and on the margin of all the reports made by me on the depositions of the witnesses he had produced, an indorsement was made, stating that the depositions were withdrawn and had been discredited. * * * Fortunately, this most guilty deception was discovered so soon that neither the reputation nor the sensibilities of anybody had suffered by the temporary credit given to it."

Had General Holt been maliciously determined to have the life of any one, would he have acted thus? Of course not. He showed himself in this affair, as always, a most honorable, high-minded, and just man.

The Secessionists will never forgive him, because, being a "Border man,"—a Kentuckian by birth,—he chose rather to remain true to the Union than to join them. But no loyal person will make this a ground of complaint against him.

Loyalist.

The Influence of Christ.*

WHO, after the Evangelists, will venture to write the Life of Jesus? This deprecatory question of Lessing has not prevented, during the last three or four decades, the composition of numerous biographies of him whose career is depicted imitatively by the Four Evangelists. Germany has been most prolific of these works. France has produced one excellent book of this class, "The Life of Jesus," by Pressensé, and another famous writing, of a critical and distinctive cast, the "Vie de Jésus" of M. Renan. Even Scotland, where the abstract discussions of theology have still the strongest fascination, has made its contributions to this species of biographic writing. It is easy to see how the minds of men are drawn away from the problems of dogmatic theology, such as predestination and free will, and fastened on the wonderful personality of the Founder. The attention is drawn away from the circumference to the center. It is remarkable that this vivid interest in the question, "What think ye of Christ?"—this concentration of thought on the Person who gives to Christianity its being,—is simultaneous with a widespread tendency, rife in all the empirical schools, to make little of personality and personal force, and to make everything of general causes and impersonal forces as determining the current of history. The one-sided character of this

last tendency, in its undervaluing of the significance of persons, and of the mysterious personal agency which is not to be resolved into anything merely physical or distinct from itself, is specially manifest when the attempt is made to explain the origin of the Christian religion. Here the great originating cause is a Person. Nothing in his environment suffices to explain him. Nothing in his antecedents or circumstances accounts for the appearance, then and there, of an individual so transcendently gifted, and predestined to exert so transforming an influence on human society.

Akin to the tendency which leads men to dwell on the history of Jesus, and to gather up all that can be ascertained respecting him, is the disposition to trace the stream of consequences which have flowed from his life, teaching, and death. In the mist of critical conjecture which is thrown over certain portions of the Evangelical narratives, and the doubts which afflict many minds, it is a relief to contemplate the verifiable results of the work of Jesus among men. Not a few derive their profoundest impressions of his ineffable power and excellence from a close survey of the history of Christendom. The growth of the grain of mustard-seed, the spread of the leaven, have a reality and impressiveness which the most skeptical minds are capable of recognizing. It is one of the best services which a work like the "Gesta Christi" of Mr. Brace renders that it gives the reader a fresh idea of the energy, the beneficent energy, that resides in the religion of Christ, and emanates from him, account for it as one may. Mr. Brace's work confines itself to the various forms of philanthropy in which the influence of Christ is directly traceable. He dwells on the mitigation of the excessive paternal authority which prevailed in the ancient world; the elevation of woman under the benign and pure teaching of the Gospel; the sanctity thrown around marriage and the domestic hearthstone; the melting of the chains of the bondman; the abolition of cruel and brutal sports, like the contests of the arena; the increased tenderness for children, compared with the practice and spirit of antiquity; the abandonment of the private wars which prevailed in the feudal ages; the discarding of torture and the reform of criminal jurisprudence; the substitution of arbitration for war, and the astonishing mitigation of the horrors of war which the spirit of humanity in modern times has introduced, etc. The effect of such a discussion depends, of course, on the interest that belongs to the illustrative facts. One sees from such a broad survey that there has been steadily operating a subtle and powerful influence which, when followed back, leads to the Cross of Christ. The truth of the sacredness of humanity, of the dignity and worth of every human soul, be its outward condition never so humble, obtained then a permanent lodgment in the human heart. There it has been living and acting with an increasing efficiency. Thus human society becomes more and more Christian. Christ is seen, not in visible form, but in his spirit, incorporated in men's thoughts and lives.

* *Gesta Christi*; or, A History of Human Progress under Christianity. By Charles Loring Brace. New York: A. C. Armstrong.

George P. Fisher.